

Traffic Control Task Force Committee

Meeting minutes of March 27, 2003

The meeting began at 10:00 am in the MDT Headquarters Building, Engineering Conference room. The following items were discussed.

1. Introductions. Attendees introduced themselves and identified whom they worked for.

2. Traffic Control Detailed Drawings. Scott Keller discussed recommended changes to the Traffic Control Detailed Drawings. Discussed was the placement of the "Begin Work Zone" sign in the signing sequence. It was agreed to place the Begin Work Zone sign on the speed limit sign in the series so that the flagger station is within the Work Zone. The grade of sign sheeting was discussed next. The department will phase in requiring "High Intensity" reflective sheeting for traffic control devices. The department will provide an incentive in contracts for providing High Intensity devices. The date requiring all devices to be High Intensity is January 1, 2005. In the interim it was agreed that the projects would be either Engineer Grade or High Intensity grade with no mixing of the grades on projects.

Action Item- Scott Keller will make revisions to the drawings based on the comments offered. Scott Keller and Construction will work on a Special Provision for the option of High Intensity sheeting for work zone signs.

3. Sign Mounting Height requirement. The Detailed Drawings require post-mounted work zone signs on rural projects to be mounted 7 feet high. The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices requires a minimum 5" mounting height. The department preferred 7 feet because it makes the sign more conspicuous at greater distance and less chance of the sign being obscured by existing regulatory signs.

Traffic Control contractors cited several problems with the 7 foot mounting height. Mounting the sign poses a hazard to the installer; winds frequently knock the signs over due to the light support systems; special equipment will be required for mounting; steep shoulder slopes increase the problems. After a lengthy discussion it was agreed to adopt the 5-foot minimum height. With High Intensity sheeting for devices being phased in it was agreed that the conspicuity issue would be addressed.

Action Item- Scott Keller will make revisions to the drawings based on comments.

4. U-Channel Sign Supports: Vertical sign panels have historically used a 1.12 lb/ft u-post for the sign support. There are concerns that the current sign and post embedment will not meet NCHRP 350 requirements. Recommended changes are to use a 2-lb/ft post and increase the post embedment.

Contractors expressed concern over both the post size increase and increased post embedment as it makes obsolete their current post inventory and poses installation problems moving to the deeper post embedment. It was suggested that the committee look at revising the current sign installation using the existing materials to see if it would meet NCHRP 350. Lloyd Rue offered to review possible revisions to meet NCHRP 350 criteria.

Action Item- Lloyd Rue and Mark Baum will investigate modifications to the existing post, sign panel, mounting height to make it NCHRP 350 compliant.

5. Traffic Control Training Plan: This topic was not discussed in detail. Committee members were advised a copy of the department's training plan was attached to the previous meeting minutes. When a member asked if contractors could attend the department training, the response was yes. Portions of the training program may not be applicable to the contracting community.

No Action to be taken.

6. Traffic Control frequent Move Specification: A draft specification was attached to the meeting minutes. Members reviewed the draft and agreed in principle to the language. It was agreed to drop the project types in the meeting. Members agreed to return detailed comments to Mark Wissinger within the next few weeks.

Action Item- MCA members will provide comments on the proposed draft and forward to Mark Wissinger.

7. Lump Sum traffic Control. MDT prepared and handed out a draft list of project types that it believes are good candidates for lump sum payment on traffic control. The list was generated as a starting point to better define what project types would be bid under lump sum. The committee agreed to the following list;

1. Pavement preservation projects (overlay and chip seal; crack sealing and chip sealing).
2. Bridge projects where the cost of the bridgework equals or exceeds 75% of the contract amount.
3. Chip seal projects on all projects excluding urban locations.
4. Urban projects that close a road section and have a defined detour in place the duration of the project, and the traffic control for the detours is well defined.
5. Multiple small work area projects with defined work areas such as guardrail, sign or signal installation work.
6. Mobile operations such as rumble strip and pavement marking installation.

Action Item- The above list constitutes approved project types for lump sum traffic control.

8. Goals and Objectives. Stephan Streeter asked the committee to re-visited the goals and objectives that the committee was originally established for. The committee goals were to look for ways to better manage contract traffic control costs while ensuring safe works zones for the traveling public and workers. Stefan was also concerned about the membership, as it exists, having the right people to obtain the desired goals.

No Action Items

9. Review of Accomplishments: Stefan Streeter had concerns about the committee making progress towards its original goals. He felt that this meeting made progress made towards the committee's goals.

No Action Items.

New Business: No new business was discussed.